

L1235



Elizabeth Dana
Warren Township High School

Elizabeth Dana sees two aspects of her life as crucial in her development: her work on the school newspaper and speech team, and her church mission trips. Working on the paper has spurred her interest in a journalism career, while her experience in speech helped develop her leadership and writing abilities. She learned compassion and empathy, however, during her summer mission work. She traveled to Washington, D.C., Tennessee and the Gulf Coast. "These mission trips have prepared me for my future better than any other experience, because they have taught me that everyone has a story to tell, and, as a journalist, I hope to make sure that people's stories are heard," she wrote. Trini Rayburn, a guidance counselor at Warren Township High School, said Elizabeth will be an asset at New York University, where she plans to attend. "Her impact will be profound," she wrote.

Elizabeth Dana
School: Warren Township High School
Hometown: Gurnee
Parents: Gregory and Anne Dana
School sponsor: Trini Rayburn, guidance counselor
Class rank: 1 out of 939
Test scores: ACT: 33; SAT: 2130
Planned college major: Journalism
Awards, honors: Best Prose award, Illinois Association of Teachers of English; Breakfast Exchange Club Student of the Month; valedictorian



Mary Elizabeth Dolan
Warren Township High School

Mary Elizabeth Dolan knows what she wants to do — she wants to practice law and then become a judge. She arrived at that decision after being involved in her community's Teen Court program, where first-time offender teens are tried in front of their peers. "Being able to help others through this program has helped me find certainty in my life goals," she wrote. Mary Elizabeth also said her involvement in Illini Girls State was pivotal. She ran for State Attorney General at the leadership camp and won the primary. She said it "helped me prove to myself that I could be capable of reaching my goal." Trini Rayburn, a guidance counselor at Warren Township High School, said leadership roles (like those on the Teen Court and in band) come naturally to Mary Elizabeth. "I know she will succeed at whatever she puts her mind to," she wrote.

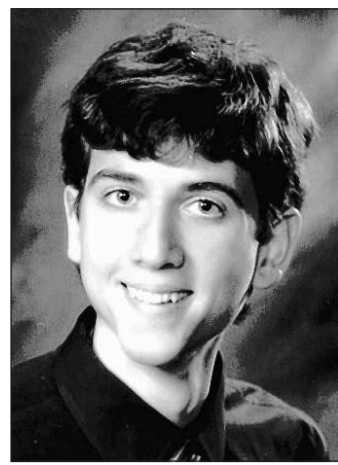
Mary Elizabeth Dolan
School: Warren Township High School
Hometown: Waukegan
Parents: Robert and Diane Dolan
School sponsor: Trini Rayburn, guidance counselor
Class rank: 1 out of 939
Test scores: ACT: 32
Planned college major: Political science, pre-law
Awards, honors: Valedictorian; Who's Who Among American High School Students; National Society of High School Scholars



Allison Hamman
Carmel Catholic High School

When writing this essay, Allison Hamman said she had to answer the simple question: "What makes me unique?" She answered herself: "I want to save the world." Trips to Austria with her choir, seeing the poor in Beijing and working at a PADS shelter made her "want to change the world's mindset on life's value." Allison said she stopped doing activities that people wanted her to do, or that colleges were looking for, saying: "Now I do these things for me." "So if you choose me, be assured you are choosing me, not an image put forth to please the world, but the talkative, sometimes crazy, always unique me." The Rev. Robert Carroll, principal at Carmel, said Allison "represents our school at its best." "Allison is a marvelous person of deep moral commitment and exceptional drive to make a contribution to our society and to the well being of others," he wrote.

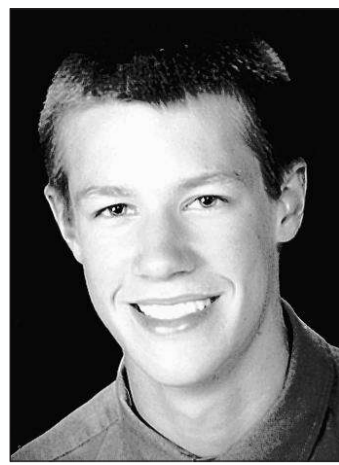
Allison Hamman
School: Carmel Catholic High School
Hometown: Libertyville
Parents: Dr. Joseph and Julie Hamman
School sponsor: The Rev. Bob Carroll, principal
Test scores: ACT: 35
Planned college major: Biomedical engineering or biology
Awards, honors: WYSE, individual second place in biology at regionals; National Merit Finalist; Superior Honors all four years



Collin Hazlett
Grayslake Central High School

Collin Hazlett wants to study the human brain. He is interested in a field called computational neuroscience, making mathematical and computer models of the brain to study the connection between neural hardware and the mind. "Plumbing the depths of the mechanics of the human brain and discovering the workings of something as enigmatic as thought itself would be a dream job for me," he wrote. But Collin said his desire for discovery is not the only motivation for his career choice. He hopes to one day develop treatments for brain disorders and help those with special needs. Rita Fischer, associate principal and social studies department chair at Grayslake Central, said Collin is one of the most gifted students she has taught in her 16-year career. "The powerful combination of brilliant, independent thought and a humble, generous personality will ensure that he succeeds in his goal of moving others in a unique direction," Fischer said.

Collin Hazlett
School: Grayslake Central High School
Hometown: Grayslake
Parents: Jay and Kim Hazlett
School sponsor: Rita Fischer, associate principal
Class rank: 1 out of 326
Test scores: ACT: 35; SAT: 2340
Planned college major: Undecided
Awards, honors: National Merit finalist; Activity All Conference Honors in Scholastic Bowl; Exchange Club Student of the Month



Matthew Hoffmeyer
Mundelein High School

Matthew Hoffmeyer hopes to be a mechanical engineer. To be successful, he knows the profession will require patience and perseverance. He is confident he can meet the challenges because of the struggles he overcame running cross country. He developed exercise-induced asthma during his sophomore year. It took months trying different medications to allow him to compete again. Although he was slowed down by the asthma, he practiced hard and achieved success. During his senior year, he was named team captain and improved his times. "The practice and perseverance I exhibited as a runner with asthma will help me be a better mechanical engineer," he said. Mundelein Principal John Ahlgrim said Matthew has contributed through activities such as track and as a Boys State delegate. "This student has truly impacted just about every area within our school in extremely positive ways and still has managed to place academics at such a high priority that he has obviously been a great natural leader in this capacity as well," he wrote.

Matthew Hoffmeyer
School: Mundelein High School
Hometown: Mundelein
Parents: Steven and Jennifer Hoffmeyer
School sponsor: John Ahlgrim, principal
Class rank: 1 out of 556
Test scores: ACT: 34
Planned college major: Mechanical engineering
Awards, honors: AP Scholar with Distinction; National Merit Commended Student; Illinois State Scholar



Sharon Lo
Libertyville High School

Sharon Lo's desire to go into medicine began when she volunteered at a hospital as part of a high school program. A smile from a patient was a nice reward, but Sharon wondered if she could do more. After an internship at the Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, her career path became clear. Her research was submitted to the Siemens Westinghouse competition and she was named a semifinalist. "From this point on, I knew that the medical field was where I could wholeheartedly pursue my love for caring and learning from patients with my passion for the sciences," she wrote. Sharon's desire to succeed is evident in her work, said Mike Bush, an AP physics teacher at Libertyville High School. Her laboratory notebooks were similar to those in college and her reports were "clear, concise and organized," Bush wrote. "She will be a valuable asset to the scientific community," he added.

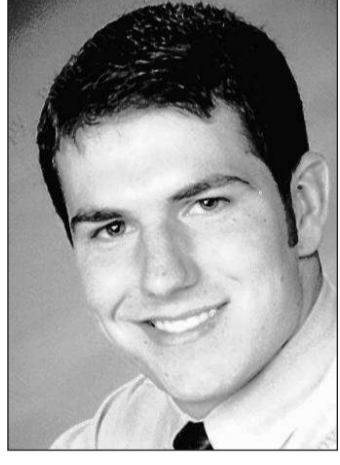
Sharon Lo
School: Libertyville High School
Hometown: Green Oaks
Parents: Ying and Linda Lo
School sponsor: Mike Bush, AP physics teacher
Class rank: 1 out of 501
Test scores: ACT: 33
Planned college major: Biology, psychology
Awards, honors: Siemens Westinghouse Competition semifinalist; North Suburban Conference All Academic team for varsity tennis; Jets Academic Challenge team (third in nation)



Caitlyn Pickens
Grayslake North High School

Caitlyn Pickens enrolled in a night class at a community college, taking a calculus class to challenge her abilities. The professor pushed her and she learned a lot. She remembered seeing him covered in chalk dust, saying he "glowed." "He loved every second of teaching," she wrote. He inspired her so much, Caitlyn has decided to teach mathematics in hopes of affecting her students the same way. "Then, perhaps after finishing a particularly tangled integral, I will wipe that chalk dust from my hair, my blouse, my skirt, even my shoes, turn to my students and see that my passion, too, is contagious," she wrote. Joseph Brysiewicz, a history teacher at Grayslake North, called Caitlyn one of the "hardest-working students and clearest natural leaders I have ever known." "In six years of teaching, I have seldom known her combination of intelligence, maturity and purpose — a truly rare student," he wrote.

Caitlyn Pickens
School: Grayslake North High School
Hometown: Grayslake
Parents: Gary and Leigh Ann Pickens
School sponsor: Joseph Brysiewicz, history teacher
Class rank: 1 out of 341
Test scores: ACT: 32
Planned college major: Education, math, English, foreign language
Awards, honors: AP Scholar with Honor, Math team second in region (2006-2007); Illinois State Scholar



Timothy Ruddell
Carmel Catholic High School

Timothy Ruddell has a variety of interests at his disposal — engineering, music and athletics. He knows he will have to forgo two of those interests in college in order to focus on one — engineering. But he won't forget the lessons he learned from music and athletics. Running has taught him perseverance. Playing the saxophone has allowed him to appreciate the arts. "This satisfies one of my life goals: to be a well-rounded person who can speak intelligently in a variety of areas," he wrote. The Rev. Robert Carroll, principal at Carmel, said Timothy is "humble, enthusiastic" and "mature beyond his years." "All in all, Timothy's best accomplishment in his high school career is the shaping and molding of a most generous, dedicated and spirited person," he wrote.

Timothy Ruddell
School: Carmel Catholic High School
Hometown: Gurnee
Parents: Scott and Linda Ruddell
School sponsor: The Rev. Robert Carroll, principal
Test scores: ACT: 36; SAT: 2340
Planned college major: Engineering
Awards, honors: Dartmouth Book Award; National Merit Finalist; AP Scholar



Jessica Verhein
Grayslake Central High School

Jessica Verhein yearns to gain a greater understanding of the world, but feels she can base her future search on knowledge she has gained in high school. She began to recognize a passion for science after fielding midnight phone calls from friends asking for help with AP chemistry, a subject that came naturally to her. "Later that year," she wrote, "I shadowed a nurse and was enthralled by the glimpse the surgical observations gave me into the human body." Rita Fischer, associate principal and social studies department chair at Grayslake Central High School, said Jessica excels in the classroom and serves as a leader and role model. "In all that she does, this student commits herself to achieving excellence and inspires it in others," Fischer wrote. Right now, Jessica says her path is to pursue medicine. After finishing graduate school, she hopes to act upon her global concerns by working in the Sudan with Doctors Without Borders.

Jessica Verhein
School: Grayslake Central High School
Hometown: Grayslake
Parents: James and Nancy Verhein
School sponsor: Rita Fischer, associate principal
Class rank: 3 out of 326
Test scores: ACT: 35; SAT: 2300
Planned college major: Human biology (with psychology and sociology) or biology, pre-medical concentration
Awards, honors: National Merit Finalist; AP Scholar with Distinction; Exchange Club Student of the Month



Yuli Zhu
Libertyville High School

The first impression Yuli Zhu had of medicine was, as she described it, "of a heavy-hearted nature." Her father was diagnosed with colon cancer when she was 11 and she began to fear everything involved in medicine. She said medicine was "a far too cruel and savage beast that I could not bear to face." But as Yuli and her mother gained strength in subsequent years, she began to develop a love for biology and, eventually, the medical sciences. "Though the valiant efforts of medicine could not keep open the door of my father's life," she wrote, "I, as my father's living legacy, could indeed use my future knowledge and loyal passion for this science to open new doors of life and hope for others." Donalee Frounfelter, a Latin teacher at Libertyville High School, called Yuli one of the top five students she has worked with in 28 years of teaching. "Her intellect and depth of character are just stunning," she wrote.

Yuli Zhu
School: Libertyville High School
Hometown: Libertyville
Parent: Ying Peng
School sponsor: Donalee Frounfelter, Latin teacher
Class rank: 2 out of 501
Test scores: SAT: 2300
Planned college major: Pre-medicine, biology, psychology, English
Awards, honors: National Merit finalist; Academic Bowl Leadership Award; Science Bowl runner-up, alternate for National Science Bowl competition